1: Ammar E, I-5 (1951) 1954
MR13 Fellahin MK13
Silwa

be sitting while his father is standing. Of course, he cannot smoke in his father's presence, or do anything that might imply that he is not giving full attention to his father. 593

Amongst the children, the eldest son is favoured by his parents as he is the first to relieve his father of some of his tasks. The importance of age and sex in parents' treatment of their children shows itself, for instance, in the distribution of meat. Boys, on the whole, receive more than girls, and the older gets more than the younger. To vary this order is regarded as one of the means of reward or punishment for the children. An elder son is not expected to argue 'face to face' with his father if the latter refuses any of the former's demands. In this case he has to send a messenger to negotiate with his father. Complete identification with the father is reflected in the saying, 'Your father's enemy is your enemy and your father's friend is your friend', which is also a further evidence of the importance of family and clan solidarity. The observance of the proper rules of conduct with parents as well as with other relatives is the tangible attribute of children described as 'muaddabeen' meaning disciplined (often wrongly translated literally as 'polite'). In his role, the father has to combine discipline backed by moral sanctions.[1]

The relations of children to the mother are certainly warmer, intimate and more affectionate. The mother's tenderness and affection for her children should be repaid in obedience, service and respect. Ali told me that a mother's prayers for her children are the most effective appeal to God. Respect and regard for her is enjoined upon her sons and daughters by the Koran and the Prophetic tradition that says 'Paradise is at the feet of mothers'.

The relationship between brothers is expected to be one of complete solidarity. The common saying goes: 'Support your brother whether he is the oppressor or the oppressed.' If a mother sees her sons squabbling over anything, she admonishes, asking them to deal with each other 'like brothers'. The admonition is also exercised when a boy stranger comes to visit the family, and the boys are asked to go out and play 'like brothers'. However, the first-born has a prominent position among his brothers and sisters. He acts as his father's representative. He gives orders to the younger brothers and sisters, and at least threatens them with punishment, sometimes telling his father. Other members of the family acknowledge and even support the prerogative of the first-born son. But, on the whole, brothers are expected to form a united front and act as 'two heads under one cap'. Older married brothers are usually held to be responsible for the care of their younger brothers and sisters after the death of the father.

Yet, in spite of the fact that brothers are expected to stand by each other through thick and thin, they are not encouraged to walk, sit or play together, especially after the age of eleven or twelve. If two or three brothers

[1] M. Fortes, 'Parenthood in Primitive Society' (summary of a lecture given in *Man*, Vol. LI, May 1951).

1: Ammar E, I-5 (1951) 1954
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Silwa

fit for prayers. It is not uncommon, whether amongst children or adults, to describe a person as disgraceful by saying that he has still got the foreskin. The relation between circumcision and ceremonial purity is also confirmed by the fact that those boys whose prepuce is absent are considered to be purified by the angels. The circumcised boy's dress, that of a religious man in open white shift and a green outer garment, could be also taken as evidence for the purificatory significance of the ritual.

It must be pointed out here that the circumcision of girls has never had the universality of that of the boys; the religious authority behind it is very weak and could be rejected, and even its practice is not universal throughout the Moslem world at present. On the other hand, some of the prophetic traditions, as mentioned earlier, do not specify its desirability for the female, and the absence of such a definite religious backing for it should render its abandonment comparatively easy. It is argued that circumcision of girls, by removing the clitoris, which is regarded as the centre of excitement, is deemed necessary for ensuring pre-marital chastity.[1] Such a statement was mentioned to the writer by the midwife in Silwa before he became aware of it in anthropological literature. The need for the control of any sexual excitability is understandable in a religiously puritanic community which considers any form of emotional stimulus, either through glance or touch, from any member of the opposite sex, other than the husband or wife, as sinful.

The circumcision ceremony could be considered as a public declaration of the child's sex, with the father as socially responsible for the ceremony in the case of his son, while the mother and her female relatives solely attend to it in the case of the daughter. In other words it provides a social emphasis on the child's alignment with its sex group. The distinction between male and female circumcision is reflected in Classical Arabic by the use of two different words—'khatan' for the boy, and 'khafd' for the girl. In the colloquial language of the village, circumcision of the boy is sometimes referred to as 'cutting his pigeon' while in the case of a girl it is described as 'cutting her cockscomb'. The operation is not suddenly performed on the child, but the mother, especially in the case of her son, may attempt to prepare him gradually for the event by caressing his organ and playfully endeavouring to separate the foreskin from the glans. While doing this, she would hum words to the effect that what she is doing will help to make him to become a man amongst men. In a community with rigid sex dichotomy, it is not surprising to find that it is a great fright, or a source of great resentment, for a small boy to be threatened by his mother that she will circumcise him, and for the girl to be threatened to be circumcised by the father. Such a threat by a parent of the opposite sex to the child is considered by the parents as one of the most dire threats that can be uttered, and it is thus used to help the child in identifying himself with the parent of his own sex.

[1] *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, Article on 'Circumcision', p. 666.

1: Ammar E, I-5 (1951) 1954
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Silwa

Chapter Six

THE AIMS AND METHODS OF SOCIALIZATION IN SILWA

In this chapter it is intended to outline the procedures and methods that are adopted in this community to inculcate the norms that transform the child, who is relatively peripheral, into the adult who is the central link in village social life. The transition can be considered, as Fortes puts it, as one 'from an economically passive burden into a producer, from a biological unit into a social personality, irretrievably cast in the habits, disposition, and notions characteristic of his culture'.[1] Fortes has also provided the writer with certain insight in evaluating the learning process as a by-product of the cultural routine, a phenomenon which obtains in the village community. It is obvious that in Silwa the education of children is not surrounded, as in some primitive societies, with ceremonies of initiation, elaborate ritual, or narration of totemic myths. Learning accrues mainly through children's observing, imitating and assisting their adults in their everyday activities. For the villagers express the educational process through emphasizing life and time as the most important educational agencies which mould and influence the character, and provide the experience. The difference between an adult and a child is, on the whole, quantitative rather than qualitative. The former knows and thus conforms to the cultural norms, while the latter does not. The commonly used word is not the classical word 'tifl' (infant) but another word which is also classical but literally means 'ignorant' (jahil)—and thus identifies ignorance with childhood. It is because of this ignorance of expected skills, norms and attitudes that the children are considered inferior to the adult, and the younger as subservient to the elder.

Here socialization is to include its two aspects of technical training and cultural or regulatory training.[2] In Chapter I it was shown how a boy or a girl is progressively introduced to the economic pursuits of adults, and what skills were expected of them at successive stages of their growth. It was also emphasized how the child was expected to take over from his

[1] M. Fortes, *Social and Psychological Aspects of Education in Taleland*, p. 6.
[2] See Introduction.

1: Ammar E, I-5 (1951) 1954
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Silwa

THE AIMS AND METHODS OF SOCIALIZATION IN SILWA

Besides learning from their parents and elders, Children also learn
● 861 through their association with slightly older boys and girls (by three or four years but certainly not more than five or six years) who usually assume the role of leadership or teachers in work or play. As in Tale society, every pupil becomes, in some situation, a teacher for others.

It must be noted, however, that the behaviour pattern and motivation in the learning situation where adults are involved are different from those of the age-group learning situation. In the former, subservience, respect, and fear are expected, while in the latter rivalry and reciprocity on equal terms are the norms. If the child does not come up to adult expectation, it is because 'it deliberately twists its neck which should be straightened by a slap'. Discipline and compulsion are the means for enforcing conformity and 'adab' on children by their elders. On the other hand, amongst the age groups, mocking, ridiculing, and scoffing at those who do not reach the expected level of maturity are the pressures exerted by their peers. In this connection, nicknames are frequently used by children to
[55] single out the ones who are laggards in their social maturity, partly a continuation of the sibling rivalry pattern of motivation.

The two following examples indicate some of the ways in which boys deal with each other. A boy of fifteen who did not appear weak found it rather difficult for some time to fill the panniers of his camel with fertilizer, and other boys had to help him. Failing to perform the task expected from boys of his age, his fellows decided to put a girl's headcloth round his head-cap, by taking off his turban. Then he was tied to the panniers and the other boys led the half-laden camel to the field. This method, occasionally resorted to by such boys, is supposed to awaken the sense of shame in those who are not sufficiently keen on doing what is expected of them. The other example is that of a fight of a boy of about ten
[82] years old with other boys because he 'broke wind' while they were playing. When asked, he denied the fact, and they went on smelling each other. When they discovered that he was the culprit, they started building him a grave in which they buried a stone as a symbol for the boy, shouting 'the farter is here, the farter is here'. They also bewailed him as adults would bewail a deceased person, by saying, 'There is no God but Allah, and Mohammed is his Prophet'. Indeed, lack of control and modesty after the age of ten can be a source of ridicule for children about this age.

85? Moreover, if restraint and docility are the keynotes of child behaviour towards adults, a free and impulsive life reigns amongst children themselves. Their own problems must be kept to themselves and not communicated whenever possible to their adults, who are not expected to enquire about children's activities. For children, it is gossip that a child would go and tell his parents what other boys and girls have been saying or doing. If two boys or more start quarrelling with each other, they should fight the issue out for themselves. The laying of complaints by children before
[866] their elders about quarrels with other children is greatly discouraged, and when complaints are taken up by fussy parents, they might keep the whole

1: Ammar E, I-5 (1951) 1954
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Silwa

as 'you are the son of people who are like princes', and this type of praise is more common than that related to the good qualities of the child himself. In this way, the identification with, and submergence into, the family is impressed upon the child. It is not surprising that on asking many young children about their names, their immediate answer was 'I am the son of so-and-so'. If the identity of the children is enquired about by the villagers, the question is normally formulated as 'Whose son are you?' It is noticeable that identification there goes with a sense of pride in one's family which causes wrangling and quarrelling amongst children as well as adults. The following conversation is typical of children's altercations in this connection. One child said: 'My father is better than yours; he never worked for someone else, and his turban has always been white. My people (our in Arabic) are all leaders (Arab sheikhs)'. The other boy retorted: 'All your people are liars and deceivers. We offer a larger tray of food for guests and on funeral occasions than yours. Your cow is "rotting" and its bones are sticking out from starvation. What is the use of just talking?'[1]

At an early age the child acquires the sense of property and becomes interested in possessions. Many uncles, or grandparents, for example, give presents to the children. Such a practice also forms the basis of one of the cardinal interests of children in animals. On my entering a house, a child insisted on showing me his goat, which his grandfather had sent him as a gift on the occasion of his circumcision. Sometimes parents may allocate a young calf or sheep to a boy, and in the case of a girl, a mother might keep a certain chicken or duck.[2] This is regarded as the child's own property, 'ala zimmatuh' or 'ala bakhtu', to be kept 'for his sake and luck', and consequently, at least theoretically, the parents do not dispose of the animal except for his or her benefit, e.g. to clothe him or her, or to buy things for him or her, or in the case of killing the animal or the chicken, the child would get the lion's share of the meat. In practice, however, under the pressure of hardship, the parents would more often sell the animal or give it away for their own account.

It is not difficult to see that the main objective of child training is to cultivate a docile and yielding disposition in the child as the main characteristic of a 'muaddab'. For the attainment of such a goal, the motive of fear is very much worked upon in the training of children by their elders during the period of childhood. Parents usually resort to making the child conform to their wishes by frightening it with an imaginary creature called 'silowa'. There is hardly any young child who does not fear this chimera which is supposed to eat children, especially at night. It is held by children that 'silowa' is a huge, ferocious animal that eats its young after suckling

[1] A. Tannous remarked that in the village community of Lebanon, swearing in mild cases usually refers to strictly personal characteristics, whereas in intense conflicts, more violent terms, usually involving the family, are used. See his article 'Group Behaviour in the Village Community of Lebanon', in *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. XLVIII, 1942, pp. 221–39.

[2] Such a chicken is usually marked by a thread tied round its leg or by cutting one of its claws.

1: Ammar E, I-5 (1951) 1954
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Silwa

THE AIMS AND METHODS OF SOCIALIZATION IN SILWA

them for some time. Boys and girls between the ages of four and seven are often heard talking about the 'silowa' roaming through the village at night on its way from the hills to its nightly drink from the Nile. The 'ghool' is another imaginary beast, with a huge and hairy body, to whose attacks the children are exposed during their sleep. Other ferocious animals, such as dogs and wolves, are also invoked by mothers to induce the child to come home early or to accept food.[1]

Some of the children's games concern themselves with the establishment of a hierarchy in the order of fears. A child would move his fingers in front of another child's eyes, challenging him, by asking: 'Whom do you fear more, your father or God?' If the child blinks, then that indicates that he fears his father more than God. This is sometimes asked of a younger child without attempting to make him blink, merely to test his knowledge. The same puzzle is also posed in a slightly different manner. An older boy would ask a younger boy the question: 'There is a very small boy in the market whom nobody can see, do you fear him or me more?' The proper answer is expected to be 'him' as the invisible small boy in the market is supposed to signify God. In this type of guessing game, it is obvious that the children learn that fear is the symptom of recognizing the dominance of the supernatural authority of God over that of the worldly authority of the father. Moreover, children test each other through the expression of fear as to whose authority they first submit, the paternal or the maternal uncle.

The fear of sacred objects is also inculcated during the period of childhood. The child is made to believe in their blessings as well as their dangers. He is taken to a saint's tomb or wears a Koranic charm when he is ill. At the same time he is warned against urinating near a saint's tomb or running about in the cemetery for fear of incurring the saint's wrath. The same double attitude is inculcated in him with regard to bread, milk, treading on written paper, passing over ashes from the burning of a charm made by someone else, or stepping over someone's legs. Durkheim has pointed out that the sacred objects are invariably thought of as possessing the power of sanctity and danger simultaneously. Psycho-analysts have traced this cultural phenomenon to the emergence into the field of consciousness of the dual role of the mother, and the ambivalent attitude connected with it. This probably mirrors the process whereby 'good objects' such as the mother or her milk turn into 'bad objects' such as the denying and frustrating mother and faeces.[2]

[1] E. S. Stevens writes: 'The Silowa occupies much the same role in Iraki legend as the witch or ogress in Western fairy tales. She is a water spirit, for she dwells in the river or in caves near running streams. Her body is covered with long hair, her breasts are pendent, reaching her knees, and when she wishes to suckle her children, whom she carries on her back, she throws her breasts over her shoulder. . . . She is fond of human flesh . . . she has a partiality for human lovers.' *Folk Tales of Iraq*, p. xvi, O.U.P., 1931. The classical word for 'Silowa' is 'Silah', pl. 'Saali'.

[2] George Devereux, 'Magic Substances and Narcotics of the Mohave Indians', in *British Journal of Medical Psychology*, Vol. XXII, 1949, p. 113.

1: Ammar E, I-5 (1951) 1954
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Silwa

THE AIMS AND METHODS OF SOCIALIZATION IN SILWA

Parents also scare their children by threatening them with dangerous creatures like scorpions and snakes. They scold them by saying: 'May you be bitten by a scorpion or a snake.' Apart from the fact that such scolding may be taken as a warning against the danger of such creatures, it is considered as a frightening threat to the children. Some children told me that they would prefer their parents swearing at them by the snake rather than by the scorpion. They told me that the reason for their hatred of the scorpion is that it was a wicked creature, which stings ruthlessly and indiscriminately, whereas the snake bites only when it is provoked. An older lad present remarked that the scorpion is the enemy of Moslems. He related that once upon a time a snake curled round a man's leg and yet nothing dangerous happened to the man; then a scorpion passed by and bit both the snake and the man, and caused their deaths. In the same gathering of boys, one of them told me that he actually saw the 'silowa' passing by him while he was sleeping near the harvest. He went on to say that after it had quenched its thrist, it gave a terrifying sound before going to its dwelling in the hills.

During childhood the instilling of fear is one of the expedients that parents constantly use to repress their children and make them docile. Yet I noticed that older boys, as well as adults, were highly ashamed of admitting fear of anything; to be courageous like a lion is the sign of a daring male, while for a girl, timidity is not a defective trait. One might suggest, in the light of Bateson and Mead's findings in Bali, that the horrifying mythical images of 'silowa' and 'ghool' are a cultural projection of the ambivalent feeling towards the parents, the 'silowa' symbolizing the mother, and the 'ghool' representing the father. Parents are thus represented as being both loving and affectionate as well as frightening and devouring.[1] Children also tell the story of the enticing man who comes to them while asleep, wakes them up, offers them dates, and leads them to an unknown world in the mountains. During the journey he reiterates that the child's mother is in front of him, and whenever the child asks about his mother he is always told that she is waiting at a short distance ahead. Thus the enticing man, by taking the children away from their homes, devours them when he feels secure.

Fear responses were quite striking during the Rorschach testing of the children as revealed by the frequent occurrence of responses such as 'silowa', 'ghool', 'scorpion', 'snake', 'wolf', 'fire', and 'blood', many of which do not actually match the blots chosen.

Moreover in the dreams of both boys and girls, the manifestations of fear, repression, and anxiety cannot escape one's notice, however one interprets these dreams. In boys' dreams, one comes across images of a child afraid of the village barber cutting off his head, the ground on which the boy is lying sinking down, a boy being chased by older people, another boy being stung by a scorpion and his family wailing for him, and so on,

[1] See also Chapter VIII on 'Children's Tales'.

1: Ammar E, I-5 (1951) 1954
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Silwa

responsible for the adult defence mechanism of rigidity and caution. However, one of the well-known characteristics of the Egyptian fellah is his stubbornness, obstinacy and tenacity, which sometimes take the form of an obsession.

Connected with producing fear in the children is the violent and bad-tempered manner in which adults administer punishment to them. Punishment, however, may be in the form of fulminations or curses, or it may be corporal. As mentioned earlier, a father may curse his son by saying 'Curse on your father; a curse on your people; a curse on your origin (seed)', and so on. It seems that such curses have their effect on the children. A child of about nine years old told me that the curse of his parents, especially that of his mother, when she uncovers her head, is a thing which he tries to avoid; one cannot enter Paradise if one invokes one's parents' anger, and their blessings increase one's span of life. Punishment can also take the form of denouncing the boy as a girl, or condemning him as a homosexual, and also through depriving him of his food or his share of meat. On certain occasions, if the child shows reluctance to comply with, or to conform to, its elders' commands, they impugn one of its senses by expressing their disapproval or reproach in phrases such as, 'Aren't you listening?' 'Haven't you got eyes to see?' 'Are you blind?' 'Don't you smell?' 'Don't you feel?' 'Haven't you got blood?' Such phrases imply that the child should have done the accepted thing without being prompted, because he has only to make use of one of his senses. It is occasionally pointed out to the child that his jaw which uttered the words, or his hand that committed the offence, or his ears that heard the unpermissible, should be punished.

Corporal punishment is not uncommon either by beating, striking, whipping or slapping. Such punishment is inflicted upon the child normally after he has committed a serious misdemeanour, such as talking back at his parents while being rebuked, throwing stones at his mother, causing trouble with the neighbours' children, or on complaints being made against him by an older person. The child's ambivalent attitude towards its parents or uncles expresses itself in its appeal for their mercy when it is thrashed by one of them. He makes a screaming appeal, by crying out: 'O father, O father, by the name of the Prophet, O father', even if the father himself happens to be the one who is thrashing him.

The mother invariably gets the worst of the child's temper, aggression and disobedience, and consequently she is apt to administer punishment more frequently than the father. She is the parent with whom the child comes into active contact in terms of give and take. The child feels her punishing powers as he breaks things, loiters on being sent on an errand, loses money which he was given to buy things from the shop, or when he makes himself a nuisance when visitors are in the house, and similar other misdemeanours. Having more contacts with children's problems of up-bringing, the mother tends to be the target of their ambivalence; they

1: Ammar E, I-5 (1951) 1954
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Silwa

wrangle and quarrel with her, are rude to her, run outside the house and throw stones at the door or climb the wall and swear at her. On the other hand, children feel that the mother is their most reliable source of care and affection, and that she is more accessible and amenable than the father. In this capacity she is the one usually approached for expressing their wishes or asked to mediate between them and the father. Mothers themselves recognize that their treatment of children is different from that of the father. This is epitomized in the mothers' popular saying to their children in persuading them to obey them: 'On the death of my father I eat dates; on the death of my mother I eat hot coal.' In this way the mother tries to win from her offspring assistance and service as she is not invested with the same power of authority as the father. On the other hand, withdrawal from the father, keeping away from his bed while he is asleep, and keeping quiet while he is about the house, is told and retold to children by the mother or older siblings for fear of punishment. The father's authority cannot be flouted; and a change in the tone of his voice must be seriously considered. Although his punishment might be less frequent than that of the mother, yet it is certainly more severely administered. While the former pinches the ear, or the thigh, and seldom slaps, the latter normally slaps and thrashes with a rope or a cane.

It is also worth noting here that very little chance is given to the child to justify his misdemeanour, and hardly any effort is made to persuade him to avoid falling into the same error. Moreover, in administering punishment, there is no consistency or regularity; for the same offence the child might be beaten harshly, or his offence allowed to pass unnoticed. This depends, of course, on the parents' mood, or on their feeling towards the child at that particular time.

Such methods for disciplining the child normally lead to the child's attempts to tell lies or go for things in a roundabout way to evade punishment. He would swear that he has not committed a fault and that it is someone else who is responsible for it, or that he was forced by older or stronger boys to do it.[1] Deceptive tricks are frequently adopted in games when, for instance, a boy tries to frighten another boy by saying that the latter's father is approaching with a stick and thus seek to compel him to leave the game. An older boy, in trying to deceive younger children, would run in front of them shouting in terror, 'The Silowa is coming, the Silowa is coming', and the young boys would disperse. One boy might tell a group of boys an untrue story, and if the teller succeeds in making his listeners 'swallow' it he would vaunt his triumph over them by saying, 'I've been telling lies. I've cut your ears off—Kaddabt 'alaikum, gattat wadanaikum.'

[1] It is interesting to note that in the Kuttab (Koran school), Kuttab sheikh enquires from one of the boys about his misdemeanour and the other boys volunteer without being asked to give evidence confirming the boy's offence. With this also goes constant attempts of children to correct each other's behaviour or ways of learning or attention.

1: Ammar E, I-5 (1951) 1954
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Silwa

It does not require any emphasis here to point out that the effects of these techniques of fear as forcing children to resort to lies and deception are reflected later in the prevailing atmosphere of adult life which is charged with suspicion, secrecy and apprehension. Fear, moreover, is an efficient lever for the maintenance of social cohesion in the pattern of father-son relationship, and hence it is not surprising to find the common saying that 'fear is a blissful thing' (al khof baraka).

The popular sayings connected with the administering of punishment are also varied and inconsistent, perhaps to maintain a balance and to avoid excess. On the one hand one hears phrases such as 'If you don't beat the child, nothing good would come out of him', 'The stick is for the disobedient', 'Those who do not feel, the stick would make them feel'. On the other hand, there are other sayings such as 'The stick makes the boy dumb'. 'The threat would have no effect on those who do not obey spontaneously', It is considered, however, that childhood is the most appropriate period for punishing and disciplining the child. It is said that the child during this time is like the maize plant in its second irrigation (this irrigation is considered to be important for the plant's growth and is preceded by the pulling out of the grass and other weeds). The concentration of punishment at this period is justified on the grounds that the boy or the girl at this stage is neither too young nor too old to learn. The only form of corporal punishment administered to adolescents on some rare occasions is slapping.

However, the administering of punishment by parents to children is checked from being unduly excessive by other relatives, neighbours or other adults who happen to be present. Mediation (literally separation—'hajazat') as institutionalized in the 'Arab council' is an important force in the legal and social functioning of the community.[1] It is practised by children themselves and even mock fights are sometimes played by them to enjoy the wranglings of conciliation similar to those amongst the adults. Some children told me that on seeing their parents quarrelling, they immediately go out of the house to invite one of their close relatives for mediation. Adults are also expected to stop children's fights if they happen to be passing by, and even punish the disputants.[2]

It is appropriate here to evaluate the period of childhood in Silwa, in comparison with their period of infancy. With the exception of observing sex and religious norms, childhood in Silwa is the period through which a boy or a girl experiences a great number of the pressures of socialization. Some modern anthropologists have pointed out the importance of discontinuities or inconsistencies in child-rearing practices as relevant cultural data especially in connection with personality organization.[3] Esther Goldfrank, for instance, postulates four categories of societies with regard to

[1] See Chapter II. [2] See Appendix X, 'Story Completion'.

[3] Ruth Benedict, 'Continuities and Discontinuities in Cultural Conditioning', in *Personality in Nature, Society and Culture*, ed. by Kluckhohn and Murray, p. 414.

1: Ammar E, I-5 (1951) 1954
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Silwa

861 the continuity or discontinuity of disciplinary policy between infancy and childhood:

(1) Societies where infant and later disciplines are weak.
(2) Societies where infant and later disciplines are severe.
(3) Societies where infant disciplines are severe and later disciplines are weak.
(4) Societies where infant disciplines are weak, and later disciplines are severe.

Goldfrank continues to say: 'From the standpoint of logic these categories pose no problems. However, difficulties may arise when an attempt is made to assign specific societies to any one of them, for permissiveness and pressure are present at all stages of development.'[1] The writer feels that the child-rearing practices compared with infant practices could be classified, without much debate or appearance of subjectivity, into the fourth category of societies where infant disciplines are weak, permissive, and protective, while the later disciplines are prompt, strict, and on the whole, severe.

It has been shown in Chapter IV on infancy how the angelic children are treated permissively and with very few controls until they start to respond orally to the external world. Perhaps the only forbidden fruit in the mother's paradise for the child is the biting of her breast while he is suckling, which normally results in her withdrawal of the breast from him, and might be accompanied by some angry words or a push. On the other hand, we have noticed how the period of childhood is seized upon to discipline the child, and make him conform as well as know his position in the adult world.

155 In this connection, a question of a psychological nature could be asked. How does the child bridge the gap or adjust himself between the early permissive training and the stern childhood discipline without a complete disintegration of his personality? In answer to such a question, certain points must be remembered. The child receives the pressures of socialization, and forgoes his mother's blessings at a stage when he is capable of using his newly-developed interest, such as walking and talking, in his contacts with other children. The social arrangement of the extended family could be also considered as a factor in making up for the mother's deprivation. The rough and aggressive games are an outlet for the strain of socialization during childhood. The gap is also bridged through the integration of the child into the work of the adults. From the economic point of view, the child is continuously conditioned to participate in farm work as a responsible member. Through work in the fields, which is meaningful for the child and indispensable to his family, the child is incorporated in the family circle, and is recognized as a valuable member in it,

[1] Esther S. Goldfrank, 'Socialization, Personality and the Structure of the Pueblo Society', in *American Anthropologist*, Vol. XLVII, 1945, p. 517.

1: Ammar E, I-5 (1951) 1954
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Silwa

858 to those of the adults, he is debarred from adult circles, and adult activities; and grown-ups do not expect their children to express any opinion on matters which are outside their domain. Although they are expected to orientate themselves to the same sphere of life, children are not given any significant role in the social life of the village, apart from their economic role. Until the age of twelve the children are not expected to [199] go to the mosque to say their prayers, and if they go they are allowed to sit in the back row only, and never in the front or the middle. Women and girls, however, do not go to the mosque at all in Silwa, and are not expected to do so. There is no religious sanction for this, however; Islam has enjoined mosque prayers on both sexes. Compared with the Tale child, the social sphere of the Silwa child is more restricted in many respects. In the former society, the social sphere of adults and children is differentiated only in terms of relative capacity. 'Nothing in the universe of adult behaviour is hidden from children, or barred to them. They are actively and responsibly part of the social structure, of the economic system, the ritual and ideological system.'[1] In Silwa, however, although children may know about the happenings and events of the adult world in the social sphere, they are not expected to take an active part, or to show interest in them, unless they are asked to do so. On some occasions the writer heard children who, on enquiring about the guests coming to the house, or the nature of the gifts taken to relatives, or where father was going, were silenced and asked to 'mind their own business'.

828 Moreover, the process of 'growing-up' is believed to be affected by the character traits of the parents and close relatives on both the patrilineal and matrilineal side.[2] The belief is that the virtues and vices of the parents and their family line are transmitted, through heredity, to their offspring. Especially in the case of outstanding physical features or social characteristics, their presence is invariably accounted for by inheritance from ancestors; if not directly inherited from the parents, they could be traced to the grandfather or to the great-grandfather. Trends of character, whether of meanness, hospitality, piety, wickedness, aggression or docility, seem to run in the families. A person who deviates from what is known about his family is referred to as 'a mistake' or 'a slip', whether in praise or blame depending on the context. One hears sayings and phrases to the effect that 'so-and-so by nature is good or bad'; 'his roots are rotten'; 'nature prevails over nurture (attaba yaghlib attatbu)'; 'people are of different metals; those who were good in the pre-Islamic period, will be equally good in Islam (annas maadin), Khiyaruhum fi al-Jahiliya, khiyaruhum fi al-Islam'.

● 861 It must be pointed out here that the process of socialization which is strongly felt during childhood and adolescence is not only conducted through the agency of the family, both conjugal and extended, but also

[1] M. Fortes, *Social and Psychological Aspects of Education in Taleland*, p. 9.
[2] See Chapter IV, concerning the child's character traits.

1: Ammar E, I-5 (1951) 1954
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Silwa

THE AIMS AND METHODS OF SOCIALIZATION IN SILWA

through age and sex groups. The family does not directly play as great a part in the educative process in Silwa as in towns or cities of Egypt. An equally if not more important part is played by other children, adults other than the parents, play-groups, gossip gatherings, groups of girls going to fill their jars, or groups of boys fetching fertilizer, situations of hand-washing, tea-serving, ceremonies and celebrations, and by hundreds of other life situations which go to communicate the heritage of the village life to the growing child. In Silwa, like the Midwestern Highlands of Guatemala, 'the heritage of the group is communicated in situations much less clearly defined than institutions . . . (through) that multitude of daily situations in which by word or gesture, some part of the tradition is communicated from one individual to another'.[1] The literary and written aspects of the village Islamic culture are left to a few literary people who teach or recite the Holy Book and enlighten the other villagers on religious matters; while theoretical religious knowledge is the concern of a few, all are concerned with the ritual aspects of religion such as prayers and fasting.

Moreover, the slow rate of social change in the village has hardly affected the aims and methods of socialization. Children are reared approximately in the same way as their parents and are expected to imbibe the same cultural assumptions, and follow the same path. A qualification must be added here. Growing up in a folk homogeneous society does not necessarily mean a smooth, painless or unhampered process. But however traumatic or frustrating the life experience is, it can nevertheless be presented to each growing individual as viable, and to that extent, bearable.[2] Intensive case studies would certainly reveal the various problems of social adjustment, and show the compensatory mechanisms of those who fail to measure up to the ritual assumptions and requirements.

[1] Robert Redfield, 'Culture and Education in the Midwestern Highlands of Guatemala', in *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. XLVIII, 1943, p. 644.

[2] Margaret Mead, 'The Implications of Culture Change for Personality Development', in *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, Vol. XVII, 1947, p. 633.

1: Ammar E, I-5 (1951) 1954
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Silwa

to be specialists in transmitting to others the religious knowledge of the Holy Book and the pious ancestors. The oral means of communicating and committing to memory the accumulated experiences is the best guide for perpetuating the group's tradition. It is not surprising, then, that old people are considered as knowing more than the young, and that, on these grounds, they are worthy of respect and obedience. The young have to wait many years before they can wield the same prestige and authority, for the instruments of wisdom may only be acquired through the passage of time. It is not unusual to hear people who wish to assert their position or to impress others with their views saying: 'I am a man who has witnessed both the pre-Islamic (jahiliya) and Islamic eras.'[1]

Good memory is certainly a great asset and indeed highly valued in Silwa, and the person with a good memory is usually described as the one with 'the full head'. The ability to remember names, places, events, and genealogies enhances the person's popularity and makes his participation and consultation desirable in social activities. The emphasis on memory training is impressed on the child as early as its efforts to learn to talk. Mothers utter a few words for the child to repeat, and then ask it to go round to all those who may be present, and say these words to each in turn, and this is recognized as the best method for the teaching of language. One of the favourite amusements of adults with children is to test the latter in reciting the names of their families in genealogical order. Very frequently, however, the adults may purposely interject incorrect names to mislead the children. Some children between the age of three and four, on being asked by the writer to recite their family names, would tell him as many as four or five of their names (the first name, followed by the father's name, the grandfather's, the great-grandfather's and so on).[2] In a symbolical way, the mother encourages the child to eat pigeon's head, as it is believed that this will foster the child's alertness of memory in later years of life.

It would be very difficult to determine here to what extent the importance laid on memory and memorization has been the product of the Islamic view of learning. It should be mentioned, however, in this connection that knowledge, for the Moslem scholars, was not so much a reaching out to the unknown (research), as it was a mechanical process of amassing the 'known'; the known being eternal and given, is unchangeable. Thus the acquisition of information and the deduction from accepted premises were the most important methods of knowledge.[3] A learned man

[1] This is, of course, an artificial claim such as the English expression, 'I don't know him from Adam'. The historical sense amongst the villagers, especially the older generation, is mainly thought of in the partition between the two eras, the pre-Islamic and the Islamic.

[2] It must be pointed out that in Silwa, or for that matter in Egypt as a whole, there is no system of first names and surnames. In Silwa, every person is always called by his first name. Unfamiliarity or respect requires only the addition of the title 'sheikh' in front of the first name.

[3] H. A. R. Gibb, *Modern Trends in Islam*, pp. 64–6.

871 His methods are by no means arduous. Two or three
794 hours a day, six months a year, and in three years the fellah children, helped by the stick, will know a good many *suras* by heart. For his pains the *fiqih* or teacher receives two loaves of bread, or one piastre, a week for each pupil.

872 Nowadays even the girls must go to school, but their
562 turn comes in the afternoon. In the morning they help their mothers and fetch in the water, trying their best to
[482] balance on their heads the little *ballas* which is given them.
857 When they grow up they will be able to carry seven gallons of water in this way. They are also made to gather dung, bird-droppings, and any other refuse which may be useful in the house or the field. They make fuel cakes (*gilla*) by
[372] taking a little mud, some chopped straw and a quantity of dung, which they knead into a paste with their hands and feet, and then take lumps of, to flatten into cakes about eight inches across. These are spread out on the ground to dry in the sun, or stuck on the wall. When thoroughly dry they are piled up on the roof. These dung-cakes are the fellah's coal; they are an essentially agricultural form of fuel, used wherever wood and money are lacking, for example in China and in several parts of France.

524 The girls have rag dolls to play with, but more often,
857 up to the age of about twelve, they join with the boys in both work and play. Occasionally, from the age of eight
[464] until they get married, they go into service in middle-class homes.

857 These children are ignorant and to all appearance neg-
593 lected. They live in a herd and seem to have no patronymics. But it would be wrong to infer from this that they are of no concern to their parents, and belong to the community at large. On the contrary their parents love them passionately, far more than they love each other. Children are never put
[736] up for sale here as they are in China, and there is no need for orphanages. Parental sensitiveness is a frequent cause of quarrels among both men and women. If a teacher hits or
861 ill-treats their child they are up in arms immediately to
871 remove him from school and take a brutal vengeance. This does not, however, stop them from using blows and insults to 'educate' their children themselves.

593 The children are also very much attached to both their parents. This attachment seems to be rooted in their

4:Walker E-4 (no date) 1934 MR13 Fellahin MR13
(ca. 1890)

But these influences are the result of fear and perhaps they
cause other diseases of a nervous character which are feared especially by the young. And since that is only the result of frightening children with the dark, and with Jinn and the bogey man[1] and other [p. 83] absurdities such as ignorant mothers tell to their children, frightening and terrifying them, the cure for the resultant ills is to eradicate the ignorance of the mothers by education, a thing which is still considered a sin in the East.

XL

INCENSING (TABKHĪRA)

" And for Syphilis (*tashwīsh*) they ' prescribed ' incensing,
Which an " old wife " among them of the tribe of Basūs prepares.
She recites over it the [Koranic] section of *Iblīs* [=the Devil]
As if Death sent her to go to and fro.
How much money was given for its fabrication ?
How many souls have been disgusted by its fumigation ?
And does their ' incensing ' with vermilion (*zungafr*)
Cure a sick person, when there is decay in the skeleton ? "

Some of the " old wives " in the provinces were famed in past ages for their " cure " of venereal disease by " incensing." It is an ancient practice in the villages until to-day it has attained to such a degree of imagination that the villagers apply the censer (*mabkhara*) to every serious disease, be it V.D. or not.

I witnessed that myself once. An " old wife " came to " incense " a man who had been sick for a long time, and his relatives were bewildered about his disease (because they would not go to a physician) and in fact, he was suffering from retention of urine due to stone. The patient died with the assistance of the " incensing " of the " doctress."

[1] [Literally, the man with (or the father of) the skinned leg (*Abū rigl maslūkha*). This bogey corresponds to our [illegible]d on Two Sticks (= Diable Boiteu = Asmodeus, Prince of Demons). [illegible] my article in *Folk-Lore*, vol. xxxviii, 4 (Dec., 1927), p. 377. Tr.]

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

23.

Enough of Play!

x539 861 The mothers have difficulty every evening, in inducing the children, who play in the streets until late in the evening, to come home to supper.

A child who is sent out to get the others, speaks:

Ya laʿibin kull el-lēle,
itʿaššu u-taʿālu!
Win mā gētûš il-lēle,
laḥaddifkum bi-ʾulʾēle,
simm el-fār
miʾ el-ʿaṭṭār.
[Iḥbaṭ ya ṭār
kull el-lēle!]

You, who play all night,
Come and have your supper!
And if you do not come this evening,
I shall throw a clod at you!
Mouse-poison
Is (to be had) at the grocer's!
[534] [Beat, tambourine,
The whole night through].

[805] 1. Night begins at sunset. Lēle, "night", often designates, therefore, our evening.
5. c I might poison you!
7. s May have been taken from some other song.

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

69.

Why Dost Thou Beat me, Mother?

539x
961

Bil-amān, ya-lummē,
wa-la tuḍrub aiye!
Lē tuḍrubni
ʿana-smi Lēle?
Rummān ṣudri ṭāb
u-ṭaraḥ eg-genēne.
Ana maʿak ʿand el-ʾāḍi
fi-hāza-l-lēle.

Do not punish me, mother,
And do not beat me!
Why dost thou beat me
When my name is Lēle ("night")?
The pomegranates of my breast are ripe,
And the garden beareth fruit.
I shall go with thee to the judge
This very evening.

4. The word lēle, "night", and Lēle, the name of a girl, have nothing to do with one another. They were originally two different words, which, in the modern language, have the same sound and for that reason are made use of here for a pun.

The girl means: "Is it not perfectly natural, that I should think of things which my very name suggests?"

7. He will concede that I am right! The ʾāḍi (Qâdi) or ecclesiastical judge, is called upon to decide especially in affairs of marriage.